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ABSTRACT

The origins and careers of junior college presidents were studied to identify the leaders and what they feel are the crucial issues of the next decade, the form of their career patterns as they moved up, and their reasons for choosing careers in administration. Of 963 subjects questioned, 662 replied. Examined were such items as age, background according to fathers' occupation, academic doctorates, major fields of study, career paths from teaching or other careers to the presidency over a 20-year span, the position held just before the presidency, and the social factors affecting formal career movements. The respondents also stated why they are in their present job, how they interpret their move to leadership, and why they chose or were chosen for the position. Replies included: to contribute to society, meet a challenge, or achieve personal satisfaction. The most critical issues they foresaw were (1) funds to handle growing enrollments and new faculty; (2) achieving a balance between occupational and transfer curricula and doing research on how best to serve society, the community, and the individual; (3) the quantity and quality of staffing; (4) establishing the proper role of the junior college. Those most experienced with the junior college, as administrators or teachers, should increase communication with all educational leadership, national and international. [Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (HH)

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AMERICAN JUNIOR COLLEGES:

LEADERSHIP AND CRUCIAL ISSUES FOR THE 1970's

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AMERICAN JUNIOR COLLEGES:
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Overview

This article provides findings of an intensive study of the origins and careers of 362 American junior college presidents. The two major purposes of this research are to identify who are the people giving leadership to American junior colleges and what they feel are the crucial issues facing this type of institution in the next decade: More specifically, what are their social origins, and what career patterns were formed as they moved to these major administrative positions? What are some of the reasons they give for choosing a career in junior college administration? In the eyes of these persons, what issues are identified as crucial issues for junior colleges in the next decade?

Introduction

It is almost trite to say that higher education in America is suffering from acute growing pains. One can agree with Clark Kerr that the American university is emerging as a unique institution in world history whose indebtedness to foreign models is readily admitted,[1] yet whose generic growth represents a mottled picture at best.

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[1] Clark Kerr, "The Frantic Pace to Remain Contemporary," Daedalus (Fall, 1964).

That the resulting contemporary institutions of higher education reflect the pluralistic character of our culture is apparent.

Against the background of burgeoning numbers of students, increased involvement of the state and federal governments in education, and a circumscribing philosophy of extended educational opportunities for all students, the junior college movement has "come of age" and is no longer viewed askance within higher education. It was formerly viewed with peripheral vision is now brought into focus for closer analysis as an integral part of the process of higher education.

Quantification of the junior college situation and predicted future growth further supports the changed role of this type of institution. In an article published in the Spring of 1968, it was noted that ". . . in the next five years, junior college enrollments will double and reach about three million and that as many as 75,000 additional faculty members will be needed."[2] It has been estimated that during the early 1970's fifty percent of all beginning college students will start their college education in junior colleges. Finally, the recently released Report by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education chaired by Clark Kerr estimated that 500 new community colleges should be established by 1976.[3]

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[2] Junior College Journal (April, 1968), p. 7.

[3] Ibid. (May, 1969), p. 7.

Because of the growth and importance of junior colleges in American higher education, this national study of those persons serving in leadership capacities was undertaken.

Methodology

The research was designed to fall within W. Lloyd Warner's theoretical and methodological framework of vertical occupational mobility among specific elite occupations in American society.[4] It has also benefited from the extensive research of junior college presidents by Raymond E. Schultz.[5] The relevant population for the study included the presidents of all two-year, accredited colleges in the United States as listed in the 1968 Directory of Junior Colleges. The sample selected for the research was the same as the population, and following a systematic pilot study, a questionnaire modified from the Warner studies was mailed to 963 academic presidents in the spring of 1968. A return of 662 questionnaires or 68.7 per cent of those distributed were found usable.

The junior college president sample is highly representative of

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[4]See for example, W. Lloyd Warner and James Abbegglen, Occupational Mobility in American Business and Industry (University of Minnesota Press, 1955), and Big Business Leaders in America (New York: Harper and Row, 1955); W. Lloyd Warner and others, The American Federal Executive (Yale University Press, 1963); and Michael R. Ferrari, "American College and University Presidents," Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, 1968.

[5]Raymond E. Schultz, "The Changing Profile of the Junior College President," Junior College Journal, XXXVI (October, 1965), 8-13; and Raymond E. Schultz, Administrators for America's Junior Colleges - Predictions and Needs 1965-1980 (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Junior Colleges, 1965); and John E. Rouche, "The Junior College President," The Junior College Research Review, II (June, 1968), 10. ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior College Information, University of California, Los Angeles, 1968.

two-year institutions based on a number of characteristics. The following table demonstrates the distribution of the sample with respect to the geographical location of the institutions. Similarly, the types of institutions represented reflect the types of institutions that exist nationally.

Table 1

Population and Sample Distribution of Junior College Presidents

Region of Institution[a]	Population Number	Population Per Cent	Usable Sample Number	Usable Sample Per Cent
New England	66	6.9	48	7.3
Middle Atlantic	137	14.2	88	13.3
South Atlantic	169	17.7	129	19.5
East South Central	81	8.4	46	7.0
West South Central	77	8.0	48	7.3
East North Central	117	12.1	81	12.1
West North Central	119	12.4	82	12.4
Mountain	43	4.5	34	5.1
Pacific	148	15.4	102	15.4
Canal Zone, P. Rico	4	0.4	4	0.6
Totals	963	100.0	662	100.0

[a]All institutions were classified by U.S. Census Regions.

Nearly three-fourths of the institutions responding are publicly controlled while one-fourth are privately controlled.

The selected research findings that follow give a systematic over-view of the occupational origins of the nation's junior college presidents and career characteristics that more clearly specify the fundamental routes used in their occupational mobility into the junior college president elite.

What Are the Occupational Origins and Career Profiles of Junior College Presidents?

The average (mean) age of junior college presidents is 49.8, ranging from an age of 28 to 70. They assumed their present positions at about 44.3 years of age, after most began working full-time in educational administration at the age of 35. The presidents (95 per cent of whom are men) have been in their present positions for about five and one-half years, while nearly 84 per cent have held their present positions for less than 10 years.

Table 2

Tenure in Present Positions

Number of years in present position	Per Cent
Less than one year	7.6
1 to 4 years	53.2
5 to 10 years	22.8
11 to 15 years	8.8
16 to 20 years	4.3
Over 20 years	3.3
Total per cent	100.0

Based on their fathers' occupations, the junior college presidents are representative of all occupational levels in the society, but a disproportionately higher percentage have come from professional and executive backgrounds rather than lower level occupations. When the occupations of the presidents' fathers are compared to the general male population (as in Table 3), four occupational groups are over-represented (professional, foreman, major business executive, and

government civil service) and three occupational groups are under-represented (skilled laborer, clerk-salesman, and unskilled-semiskilled worker). A proportional representation exists for farmer and military occupational categories.

Table 3

Occupational Distribution of the Fathers of Junior College Presidents and the United States Male Population for 1940[a]

Occupation	Fathers of Junior College Presidents (Per Cent)	Per Cent of U. S. Male Adult Population, 1940[b]	Ratio[c] (Fathers Occupation ÷ U. S. Male Occupation)
Unskilled laborer	6	31	0.19
Skiller laborer	12	14	0.86
Clerk, salesman	5	13	0.38
Foreman	7	2	3.50
Executive, manager, proprietor[d]	19	10	1.90
Professional	23	5	4.60
Farmer	22	22	1.00
Government (civil service)	5	1	5.00
Military and other	1	1	1.00
Total per cent	100	100	

[a]1940 Census figures were used to indicate U.S. adult male statistics for the approximate time when the presidents first began working full time.

[b]Bureau of the Census, 1940, Volume I, pp. 75-80.

[c]Proportional representation = 1.00

[d]Includes major business executives and small and large business owners.

The respondents studied at a variety of institutions throughout the nation at each degree level with 57.6 per cent earning an academic doctorate. Table 4 lists the highest degree earned by the presidents.

Table 4

Highest Degree Earned by Junior College Presidents

Type of Degree	Per Cent
Bachelor's	3.9
Master's	34.0
Doctorate	57.6
Ph.D.	(22.3)
Ed.D.	(34.2)
Other	(1.1)
Other Type of Degree	3.1
Bachelor of Law	(0.6)
Bachelor of Divinity	(1.4)
Other religious degree	(1.1)
Did not earn a college degree	1.4
Total per cent	100.0

The respondents began their college education in most cases with majors in arts and letters and the physical science fields. However, at the master's and doctoral levels, there was a major shift to education as seen in Table 5. Of the individuals who earned doctorates, nearly 80 per cent received these degrees in education.

Table 5

Major Fields of Study of Academic Presidents

Major Field	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate
Agriculture	3	1	1
Business	8	3	1
Engineering	7	3	1
Education	13	52	45
Natural Sciences	20	7	2
Arts and Letters	38	19	6
Social Sciences	10	6	2
Not Applicable (did not earn degree at this level)	1	9	42
Total per cent	100	100	100

Nearly half the presidents began their careers as teachers at the elementary-secondary levels and only 10 per cent began in junior colleges. Table 6 highlights the basic career paths followed by the presidents in five-year intervals, beginning with their first full-time positions.

Table 6

Presidents' Occupations at Five-Year Intervals

Occupation	First Full Time Position	5 Years Later	10 Years Later	15 Years Later	20 Years Later
Elem-Secondary					
Teacher	49	20	7	4	2
Dept. Chairman	0*	3	1	1	1
Principal	4	16	7	5	2
Superintendent	1	8	11	6	4
Junior Colleges					
Faculty	7	8	6	2	2
Dept. Chairman	0*	2	3	3	0*
Dean	0*	3	5	8	5
Admin. below V.P.	2	4	8	5	3
Vice President	0*	2	3	6	3
President	0	2	12	31	57
Four-Year Colleges					
Faculty	8	8	9	6	4
Dept. Chairman	0	2	3	2	1
Dean	0	0*	1	3	2
Admin. below V.P.	0*	2	3	4	2
Vice President	0	0*	0*	1	1
President	0	0*	0*	0*	0*
Other Professions	10	6	8	6	4
Business Position	8	4	3	2	2
Government	1	1	2	1	1
Military	7	8	6	3	2
Other	1	0*	0*	0*	0*
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100

*less than 0.5 per cent. Per cent columns may not add to 100 due to numerical rounding.

At the five-year point in their full-time careers, nearly one-fourth were principals or superintendents and over 20 per cent had moved into the junior college area. At the ten-year point, 37 per cent were in junior colleges occupying positions at all levels. Between ten and fifteen years in the full-time careers, much greater numbers moved out of elementary or secondary schools into junior

colleges, and at the fifteen-year point, nearly one-third had attained the presidency. At the 20-year point, 57 per cent had attained the presidency, and only 9 per cent remained in elementary-secondary schools. Relatively few presidents spent extensive periods of time in academic administration in four-year colleges and universities over the twenty-year career span. There is little evidence of any extensive mobility into and between business, government, or military occupational categories.

About two-thirds of the presidents had some prior teaching or research experience in a college or university, although 52 per cent earned no higher rank than an instructor. About 13 per cent attained the rank of assistant professor, 12 per cent were associate professors, and 23 per cent were full professors.

Prior to assuming his present position, the "typical" junior college president was a high-level academic administrator in a junior college, a position he held for less than five years. Nearly 80 per cent of the presidents moved to their present position from a different institution or organization rather than internally. Table 7 gives the actual positions held immediately prior to assuming their present positions.

Table 7

Position Held Immediately Prior to Assuming Present Position

Prior Position Held	Per Cent	Rank Order of Top 10 Springboards to Presidency
Junior College Position	(46.4)	
Dean	20.5	1
President of another junior college	11.6	2
Vice President	6.3	4-5
Other Admin. Position	6.6	3
Faculty Position	1.4	
Four-Year College Position	(15.6)	
Faculty	5.1	9
Dean	4.9	10
Department Chairman	2.6	
Pres. of four-year college	0.9	
Other Admin. Position	2.1	
Elementary-Secondary Schools	(17.9)	
Superintendent	6.3	4-5
Principal	4.2	
Other Admin. Position	6.0	6
Teacher	1.4	
Other Educational Position	(7.8)	
State Board of Education	2.2	
Educational Association	5.6	8
Business Position	2.0	
Government Position	2.0	
Military Position	1.5	
Other Professions	5.7	7
Clergy (4.8%)		
Foundation Official	0.7	
Other Position	0.4	
Total per cent	100.0	

It can be seen in Table 7 that few junior college presidents came directly to the presidency from business, government, or military positions. The overwhelming majority (88 per cent) came directly from education, especially junior college positions. One out of three

presidents held the position of dean or president of another junior college immediately prior to assuming their present positions. The major springboards into the junior college presidency have been: dean, president, or other high-level administrator in a junior college; faculty member or dean in a four-year college; superintendent or principal in secondary education; and a relatively large percentage came directly from a high level office in a state or regional educational association. A clergy position has been particularly important for those who have moved to church-related junior college presidencies. It is interesting to note that nearly 12 per cent of the presidents have served as presidents of other junior colleges. Few four-year college presidents have moved to a junior college presidency.

A statistical presentation of career patterns runs the risk of conveying the idea that career decisions are made in a simple mechanistic fashion. However, career decisions are part of a complex, on-going process involving an individual with his total work environment. Such decisions relate partly to self-images of who one is or who one would like to be, to one's unique qualities or abilities, and to the realities of occupational opportunities that come to an individual. It is partly due to a blending of social-psychological factors that provide one with certain advantages, exposures, and perceptions. For some, career decisions appear to be planned, conscious choices, and for others, career mobility appears to result from unplanned accidents in which one is essentially chosen or one seems to drift into a given occupational niche.

We have explored some broad social factors that contributed to

the formal career movements formed by junior college presidents up to the present time. Now we will attempt to provide some understanding of why they are in their present positions, of how they interpret their movement to the headship of the nation's two year institutions of higher education. Their perceptions are necessarily time-bound, that is, they are offering impressions of why they are in their present positions now that they are at the top. Were they asked to explain their career movements a few years ago, their perceptions might have been different. Were they to reflect on their careers a few years hence, they may offer other explanations. Placed against the formal description of career movements, the following discussion provides a better understanding of the types of individuals who are at the forefront on the American junior college movement.

Why Did These Individuals Choose Careers in Junior College Administration?

About one hundred and fifty of the junior college presidents offered written, personal statements that indicated why they are in junior college administration. By far, the response given most often was that an administrative career in junior colleges provides the best opportunity to serve or make a contribution to society while fulfilling a commitment to higher education. Typical of these remarks is the following comment:

> Being a bit of a rebel, my career has veered from industry to education, to industry to education several times and I witnessed from practical experience that there is a tremendous gap between public school, post-secondary education, and post-secondary higher education. It is apparent that we are meeting the needs of a small minority group

> of people and that there are literally thousands that need specialized, formal training that neither the secondary institutions or the higher institutions of learning are willing to provide. Consequently, I chose a career as an administrator and have been operating for a number of years an institution involved in meeting the needs of people.

The second highest set of responses cited the creative and challenging opportunities of a key administrator in a junior college as the way for one to achieve the greatest amount of satisfaction in life.

> I chose administration in higher education because I feel that this is one of the fields of the future where the center of action and creativity is moving. Fifty years ago the center was business-- today it is moving to education and government service (including politics). Nothing has happened since I took this position to change my feeling. I feel that this work is the closest to where I can realize my talents, however modest they may be.

A fairly large group stated that they did not choose a career in junior college administration but rather "it chose me." It was a matter of being at the right place at the right time or an accidental happenstance. The following quoted response is typical:

> Honestly, I did not choose or pick my present position. The members of the Board persuaded me to try to head this college. The progress over the last five years has encouraged me to plan to continue at least for the present.

Many who lead church-oriented junior colleges mentioned service and a commitment to that type of institution as being an important reason they are in such a field:

> The deep-seated conviction that educational institutions of religious orientation are needed for the continuing enrichment of the democratic outlook.

Others talked about the possibility of working with young people, and their general preference for administrative responsibilities.

A few spoke of the higher salaries and life style available as a college president as the main factor in choosing a career in administration in junior colleges. Very few referred to specific preparation and training experiences as reasons for which they chose a career in administration.

In summary, the perceptions of those responding reflect a definite feeling that a career in administration in junior colleges provides a way to make a contribution to society as a person involved in a challenging kind of educational opportunity which affords the possibility of great personal satisfaction. Although many mentioned the frustrations and stresses associated with the role, nearly all believed that the rewards outweighed the problems. Their remarks lead one to conclude that in general, these individuals see higher education as the most challenging area in this society to devote one's energies and talents, and the junior college movement as the most exciting action center within higher education. An administrative career gives an opportunity to shape the direction and content of the institutions in a more influential manner than that provided in any other role.

What Are the Crucial Issues Ahead?

Few would have predicted the phenomenal development of the junior college movement just a few decades ago. In the last few years the boom predictions of development have been modified, revised and adapted many times as new institutions are founded almost overnight. Recognizing the possible pitfalls in posing such a question, respondents were requested to list the crucial issues

facing junior colleges in the next ten years.

Approximately two hundred and fifteen junior college presidents responded to this open-ended question. The top four issues given by the respondents made up a total of 76 per cent of the total problem areas cited. By far, the issue cited as the most crucial by more respondents was that of financing to meet the demands of growing enrollments and new facilities. Private college presidents also listed financing as a problem of major concern but frequently discussed this issue more in terms of general operational needs than financing in response to burgeoning numbers of students. Typical of the expressed concern for financing was the following comment:

> The funding of education will be a very crucial point. It has become more obvious that education of the masses will be the answer to our social ills. However, to do so, society will find it necessary to increase the investment by taxation and contributions. This truly will be one of the more difficult problems for administrators in colleges for the next decade.

The second issue listed in rank order was that of the curriculum. Concerns expressed related to the proper institutional balance of occupational and transfer courses and the need for greater research and experimentation with the curriculum to serve best the needs of society, the local community, and the individuals enrolled.

The quantity and quality of staffing was the issue which ranked third. Such problems as the need for effective teacher training, greater commitment as teachers on the part of faculty members, personalization of learning experiences, and more qualified staff and faculty members were frequently cited.

Clarification of what is the appropriate role of the junior college was ranked fourth as a crucial issue for the next decade. Typical of comments expressed regarding this issue are the following remarks:

> I believe that the most crucial issues facing junior colleges in the next ten years would be finding the proper role, scope and function of this type of institution and educating the public of the community college's objectives.
>
> The transfer or academic function of the Junior college is well established with the question remaining as to who should "eat at the table." In occupational technical areas the role is much less clear. Alternate training agencies created by other agencies are competitive or duplicating both in funds and function. The proper Junior college role in problems of society is, no doubt, one of the major issues.

A number of other issues were listed as crucial in the next decade. The pervasive concern for campus unrest is reflected in the fact that the three issues which ranked after the first four in order of importance were militant students, militant faculty, and campus governance.

In conclusion, the crucial issues for the next decade as related by the junior college presidents reflect both concern and hope for this relatively new type of educational institution.

Edmond Gleazer, Jr., Executive Director of the American Association of Junior Colleges, recently reported that the current requirement for new community college presidents is well over one hundred each year.[6] That the future of junior colleges is inexorably tied to the leadership of these institutions is obvious. The determination of relevant educational programs, the considered growth

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[6]Junior College Journal (March, 1968), 21.

and development of the institutions, the securing of financial resources, and articulation with the larger community are all requisite tasks for the able leader. One can readily agree with Gleazer that now is the time for those who know the community college well through their own administrative practice and teaching experience to step up communication with educational leadership both nationally and internationally.[7]

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[7] Junior College Journal (March, 1968), 21.